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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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***Wallace Wayne Hooks, Sheriff of Treutlen County, and
Ryan Keith Griner, Deputy Sheriff of Treutlen County
Indicted for Civil Rights Violations***

SAVANNAH: Rick Thompson, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia, announced today that a federal grand jury sitting in Savannah, Georgia, returned a four count indictment charging Wayne Hooks, age 49, Sheriff of Treutlen County, with three counts of a violation of civil rights in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 242. Ryan Keith Griner, age 24, is charged with one count of violation of civil rights and one count of obstruction of justice in violation of Title 18, United states Code, Sections 242 and 1512, respectively.

The Indictment charges that Wayne Hooks, on October 27, 2001, in Treutlen County, while acting under the color of the laws of the State of Georgia, assaulted two arrestees by the use of unreasonable force. The Indictment also charges that Ryan Griner, on October 27, 2001, in Treutlen County, while acting under the color of the laws of the State of Georgia, assaulted an arrestee by the use of unreasonable force. Ryan Griner is also charged with obstruction of justice by attempting to influence the testimony of a person during a criminal proceeding.

The maximum punishment if convicted for a civil rights violation when bodily injury is shown is 10 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 on each count; for the obstruction of justice charge, 10 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000.

Thompson stressed that an indictment is only an accusation and is not evidence of guilt. The defendants are entitled to a fair trial, in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The case was investigated by Special Agent Vince Dreaden of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Ms. Lisa Krigsten, Trial Attorney, Civil Rights Division, United States Department of Justice, and Frank J. DiMarino, Assistant United States Attorney.

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